

I am a voracious news consumer, subscribe to two newsdailies, one local, one national, and several journals, weekly and monthly. I regularly listen to local/national radio and tv news programs. And I depend on the implicit independence of these organizations and oppose any proposal which undermines journalistic competition.

Your reliance on the dissemination of "independent" news through the internet is unwise. The internet is in a developing stage- information gleaned from this source is notoriously unreliable and difficult to substantiate, unless the source is already a reputable media company, ie. old-technology radio/tv/print. (A notable exception is Slate, owner: ruled-a-monopoly Microsoft.)

In this age of corporate partnerships/alliances/mergers/etc. it is a job indeed to keep a source's corporate links clear. This problem creates an environment conducive to new conflicts-of-interest which may remain opaque to the public. One need only remember the complicity of CNBC in the stock market bubble hype to recall our acute vulnerability to being misled. Relaxing federal ownership requirements will do further harm to an already tenuous media/public relationship.

Surely most of us have little time and inclination to function as media integrity watch-dogs. The framework underwhich news organizations operate, underpinned by federal law, must be as friendly as possible to the needs of media consumers, not to the needs of media conglomerates. Please do not make it more difficult to be a rational and informed citizen by allowing diversity, even integrity, to be stifled further by the pressure of media behemoths.

Sirs, the power you wield over the future of our ability to collect, analyze, and criticize our culture, civilization and public discourse is significant. Please soberly consider the impact rules changes will have on our republic.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nicole Hallberg
Kirkland, WA